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The Prodigal Father



The Prodigal Father



from
a sermon preached by the
REV. LENNOX FRASER, M.A.
at Knox Church
Collingwood

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GREETING!

This is to wish you a right Merry Christmas and the happiest of all New Years. Whatever may be in my glass when I raise it (as I shall) on Christmas Day, this will be my thought for you: "Here's to your good health, and your family's good health, and may you all live long and prosper."

C. C. Ronalds

CHRISTMAS, 1929

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APOLOGIA

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arly in January last I happened to meet a friend who had received one of my last year's booklets. He admitted being deeply moved by the story, "I, Your Father?" He said, however, that there were two sides to the theme that was raised, and as illustrating the other side he took from his pocketbook a clipping that he had long been carrying of a sermon preached in Knox Church at Collingwood, Ontario, by the Rev. Lennox Fraser.

The clipping gives, in parable form, a narrative which forms so striking a sequel to the story, "I, Your Father," that it seems to me to be its logical successor. Therefore you will find it reproduced in the pages which follow.

Christmas is, of course, a time when the relations between parents and their children take on an added charm. At this time parents realize more acutely than at any other season that children are, indeed, "the idols of hearts and households." As for the children themselves the added companionship with their parents which this festival assures to them is not the least part of the charm which is Christmas. We know they need our companionship more than anything else at Christmas, but what of other times? Are we not apt to overlook the companionship of which they are in constant need, and most of all, perhaps, are we not apt to overlook our need of their companionship?

John Hay says, in "Little Breeches," something to this effect:

"I think that rearing a little child
And bringing him into his own,
Is a derned sight better business
Than loafing around the throne."

*If, after reading "The Prodigal Father,"
you feel like saying it is a better business and
in more ways than one, then the hesitancy
which I feel at launching forth something
that may savor of moralizing need not have
disturbed me after all.*

C.C.R.





The Prodigal Father

*A*certain man had two sons, and the younger of them said to his father: “Father, give me the portion of thy time, and thy attention, and thy companionship, and thy counsel which falleth to me.”

And he divided unto them his living in that he paid the boy’s bills and sent him to a select prep-

aratory school and to dancing school and to college, and tried to believe that he was doing his full duty by the boy.

And not many days after, the father gathered all his interests, and aspirations, and ambitions, and took his journey into a land of stocks and bonds, and securities, and other things which do not interest a boy, and there he wasted his precious opportunity of being a chum to his own son.

And when he had spent the very best of his life and had gained money, but had failed to find

satisfaction, there arose a mighty famine in his heart; and he began to be in want of sympathy and real companionship.

And he went and joined himself to one of the clubs of that country, and they elected him chairman of the house committee and president of the club and sent him to parliament, and he would fain have filled himself with the husks that other men did eat, and no man gave unto him any real friendship.

But when he came to himself, he said: "How many men of my

acquaintance have boys whom they understand and who understand them, who talk about their boys and associate with their boys, and seem perfectly happy in the comradeship of their sons, and I perish here with heart hunger! I will arise and go to my son, and will say unto him: "Son, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight; I am no more worthy to be called thy father; make me as one of thy acquaintances."

And he arose and came to his son. But while he was yet afar off, his son saw him and was moved

with astonishment, and instead of running and falling upon his neck he drew back and was ill at ease.

And the father said unto him: “Son, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight; I am no more worthy to be called thy father; make me as one of thy acquaintances. Forgive me now and let me be your friend.”

But the son said: “Not so. I wish it were possible, but it is too late. There was a time when I wanted to know things, when I wanted companionship and coun-

sel, but you were too busy. I got the information and I got the companionship; but I got the wrong kind, and now, alas, I am wrecked in soul and body and there is nothing you can do for me. O, my father, you are too late, too late!"

*Four hundred and seventy-five copies of
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The prodigal father, from a
sermon preached

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